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# GS OF LUCILLA

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# SONGS OF LUCILLA





# SONGS OF LUCILLA

*"Laissez-moy penser à mon aise,  
Hélas ! donnez m'en le loisir.  
Je devise avecques plaisir,  
Combien que ma bouche se taise.*

*"Quand Merencolie mauvaise  
Me vient maintes fois assaillir  
Laissez-moy penser à mon aise,  
Hélas ! donnez m'en le loisir.*

*"Car afin que mon cœur rapaise  
J'appelle Plaisant-Souvenir,  
Qu'à tantost me vient resjouir  
Pour ce, pour Dieu ! ne vous desplaise,  
Laissez-moi penser à mon aise."*

CHARLES D'ORLÉANS.

LONDON  
ELKIN MATHEWS, VIGO STREET

1901

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*Feb. 14, 1925*

T

## TO CHRYS

*The word so sought is still unsaid,  
The longed-for flower left out of reach,  
And it shall be unwrit, unread,  
What each of us hath been to each.*

*David the Temple might not build,  
Whose hands defiled were with war,  
And my dear wish is unfulfilled,  
To say how sweet to me you are!*



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## PART I.

**B**



## To Fancy

O, GLORIOUS moth of moody phantasy !  
Fretting the mortal garment of the mind  
With passionate heat and cold perplexity  
Of sanguine thought, and feeling undefined;  
That prey'st on spirits sensitive, and frail,  
For the dim splendours of thy damask bloom,—  
Leaving dull natures, in impervious mail  
Of commonplace, at leisure to consume !  
O, wingèd fancy, that with wasteful flame  
Our day's mak'st briefer to make bright thy beam !  
O, blessèd thief of time, whose theft none blame,  
Though life thou shorten by thy shadowy dream,—  
How should'st thou fear to haste this "fitful fever,"  
That round the sacred Lamp circlest for ever !

## The Mighty Unfallen

LIKE to the Titans that made war, of old,  
 On the young god that might not be withstood,  
 Dreaming his dazzling brightness to blindfold  
 With frowns of their stupendous brotherhood,  
 The forest giants of the wood, and field,  
 That with the wind have battled all night long,—  
 Denying, at the word of heaven, to yield  
 Their ancient sceptre, staggered stand, but strong :  
 And though rain-drops drip from their boughs bright-  
     leaved

With sounds as of Olympian laughs ceased,  
 And from the mad night, many that's bereaved  
 Of mighty limbs, they shine as from a feast,  
 They know foredoomed their long undaunted right  
 Of dark interpretation of the light.

## In Spring

Now Spring makes wide the horizon's wintry scope,  
And lifts the curtains of low-clouded skies,  
And in the field's parched unprophetic slope  
Primrose and windflower open wondering eyes;  
And like to rocks, at the sea's ebb laid bare,  
That are submerged by the returning tide,  
The trees, that stretch gaunt branches to the air,  
Summer's fresh floating foliage soon shall hide:  
The old rooks, busy bearing sticks and straw  
To build upon the pines' precipitous height,  
Bewitch the world with their slow, sleepy, caw,  
And like the Land of Promise in the light,—  
Where mists with sullen menace girt the plain,  
The everlasting mountains gleam again !

## In the Chrysalis Months

**BEHIND** these thick clouds throb the host of heaven,  
And of their sullen mass, ribbed line on line,  
Gold shores shall glow, in sunset seas of even,  
And, in dim lands of Dawn, snow-mountains shine !  
And o'er these woods and meadows of no hue,  
That now in the sky's stupor acquiesce,  
Green-wreathèd April sweetest flowers shall strew,  
And Summer-night steal like a sorceress :  
So with the " Winter of our discontent ;"  
Though by no breath the stagnant mind be stirred,  
Though Fancy's cloud-rack with no wind be rent,  
And the soul's voice be vibrant with no word,  
The brain's grey cells with Nature's self shall vie,  
And be the faëry court of phantasy !

## To Winter

**STERN** goddess of a world of leafless trees  
 O'er which the moon long hangs her lamp out-worn,  
 And meadows folded in a fleece unshorn  
 Of dew-drops that to clear-cut crystals freeze!—  
 Thy breath no fragrance brings, as Summer's breeze,  
 No lay unlocks thy lips, from night to morn,  
 Who hast, for lover's lute, the hunter's horn,  
 And hushes all things, but the winds and seas!

Sorceress of Silence, Scatterer of Song,  
 The sweet birds starve, and stiffen, in thy sight;  
 Chid by thy presence are the prattling rills;  
 To thee the bloodless hollow-gazing blight  
 Of fatal-limned Medusa doth belong,  
 Who mak'st to marble smiling fields and hills!



## After Reading "Othello"

ONCE more of Desdemona and the Moor  
 I read, from that first aching ecstasy  
 Of utmost bliss, that "If 'twere now to die,"  
 Till its "wealth fineless" waxèd "winter-poor"  
 From the sharp pinch of damnèd pining doubt;—  
 Of fond love blown to heaven without remorse,  
 By vengeance desperate, bloody, demon-hoarse,  
 And fatal anguish for the light put out:—

And, at the close, as though a great storm fell,  
 Lulled by the sound of lamentable rain,  
 As once before, it seemed to me again  
 That in the heaving silence I could hear  
 Half-stifed sobs, but know not whence they were,—  
 If human or of pitiful souls in hell.

## The Cuckoo

As, in cool-tempered airs of April-time,  
The Cuckoo's song sends through each sense a thrill  
Of swift anticipation of the prime  
That, ere it ceases, Summer shall fulfil ;  
But when, like snow dissolving on the ground,  
The wind-flowers waste in warmth of later sweets,  
Men sigh to think how, soon, grown hoarse, its sound  
Shall be the burden of the brazen heats ;  
So, though when first falls on the poet's ear  
Returning fancy's long-desired voice  
His spirit leaps the longed-for thing to hear,  
Anon he fainteth while he doth rejoice,  
Knowing, through many a feverish day and night,  
The fervour that must quench its first delight !

## Loss and Compensation

WHEN first, some Autumn's eve, one sets ablaze  
The pile laid ready on the burnished dogs,  
'Tis good to watch how the swift flame siege lays,  
And slow surrender of the stubborn logs;  
But while a soothing sense the wood-fire brings,  
With its fantastic fumes, and weird discourse,  
—Like spirits mingling with familiar things—  
Yet, with the comfort, comes a keen remorse  
For the fall'n giant of the leafy grove,  
Where open daylight desecrates the glooms,—  
So, Sweet, because this fire of wedded love  
Our single loves, like fuel sear, consumes,—  
Even while we glory in its light, we mourn  
The shadowy longings that it's made forlorn!

## Heat Without Shadow

**PHŒBUS** when full he flameth on the world,  
 For fear his beams might scorch or wither it,  
 Biddeth the forest leaves be all unfurled,  
 And closer on the ground the shadows knit;—  
 But the fierce sun of unassuagèd love  
 The spirit that consumes with frenzied fire,  
 No shade affords of pyramid, or palm-grove,  
 In all the arid desert of desire,  
 Nor bates the pride of his imperious heats  
 For any branching tree, or buttressed wall,  
 But, on the soul's bare plain, unpitying beats,  
 And best it were he never shone at all—  
 If for his burning summer be not sent  
 The blessèd shadow of the heart's content !

## Love's Alarum

**WHEN** your swift word my spirit took un-armed  
 Against the sudden sharp assault of joy,  
 My swooning sense with shadowy noises swarmed—  
 Of care-dispersing viol and haut-boy,  
 And caw of rooks to purge fair lands that come  
 The dearthful caterpillar devastates,  
 And fearless music of shrill fife and drum  
 That tells of rescue to beleaguered gates,  
 And slowly-boomed dizzy-changing din  
 Of solemn bells, with clamorous clang and chime,  
 Like gold-voiced oracles that usher in  
 The dreamed splendours of unfolded time:—  
 So full of comfort to my longing ear  
 The cry of Love came,—the Deliverer !

## Six Sonnets from Petrarch

### HE FINDS COMPANY IN SOLITUDE

ALL day I wander by untravelled ways,  
 Alone upon my thronging thoughts to brood,  
 Only intent how I may turn my gaze  
 From every trace of human neighbourhood;  
 Seeking still men's society to shun  
 Lest that my secret state they should discern,  
 Because my haggard mien would tell each one  
 Of how love's flames within my bosom burn;  
 So that methinks that not a wood, or glen,  
 Or hill, or stream, but knoweth of what stuff  
 My life is made,—that's hid from other men;  
 And yet there is no way so steep or rough  
 Where I may go, but that Love comes with me,  
 And but we go discoursing, I and He.

## NATURE HIS CONFIDANT

O, LOVE ! with whom low-communing I went  
 In happy times, along this pleasant walk,  
 Still to resume the same sweet argument  
 Of whose one theme we never tired to talk ;  
 O, flowers, green coverts, shadows, soft-blown airs,  
 Valleys, and hills, and fields scorched by the sun !—  
 Most patient listeners to my love's affairs,  
 With hopes, and fears, and fancies, never done ;  
 O, dreamy dwellers in the dusky woods !—  
 Naiads, and ye that the dense-flourished floor  
 Of welling waters nurtures and secludes !—  
 My days so prosperous, once, now are as poor  
 As death who's spoiled them : So to each from birth  
 Is dealt the measure both of dole, and mirth.

## SPRING, A CRUEL REMEMBRANCER

Now April comes, with his sweet company  
Of flowers, and leaves, and grass, and limpid song,  
And lengthening days he brings with him along,  
And sanguine Spring-time, young eternally ;  
The fields laugh, and the skies are filled with light,  
The gods are gladdened on their heavenly hill,  
And every creature feels again love's thrill,  
Love flows from sea, and plain, and vale, and height :  
To me alone this time for grief gives cause,  
Renewing in my thought the loss of her  
Who was my life's Spring, and because of whom  
The limpid song of birds, and flowers' sweet bloom,  
And lovely smiles, to me are crueller  
Than eagles' talons or than tigers' claws.



## HIS DAYS DARKENED

HER eyes that I have sung so ardently,  
And perfect-moulded hands and feet, and face,  
That made me like to one of different race,  
Strange, to myself, and to men's company;  
The radiant frenzy of gold-wreathèd hair,  
And the sweet light of that divinest smile,  
That made of earth a paradise awhile,  
Have left but dust to witness that they were;  
And yet the bitter fates my days prolong,  
That all in mist and darkness now are gloomed,  
Their light gone out,—like to a lamp consumed:  
Therefore I make an end of amorous song,  
Each drop of Inspiration's spring is dry,  
And all my music changed into a cry!

BEAUTY CEASES TO STIMULATE HIS  
MIND

Nor summer night, with still-amazèd stars,  
Nor, on the Sea, pageant of painted ships,  
Nor Spring-time forest, where the fleet fawn skips,  
Nor welcome news, that taketh unawares,  
Nor theme of love, woven in song, or tale,  
Nor, through fine-shivered fountains, on smooth lawn,  
Glimpse of fair maidens dancing in the dawn,  
Nor in the dusk, glitter of men in mail,  
Nor is there aught beside can charm or touch  
My heart, long buried in my lady's tomb,  
While, imperceptibly, my days consume,  
And yet of tedious life there's left so much,  
And death, so-longed-for, that my soul's great star  
Hath in his keeping, seems from me so far !

C

## A LEAVE-TAKING OF HIS THOUGHTS OF LOVE

As still my days draw nearer to that day  
Of mortal misery wont to make an end,  
As downhill, ever swifter, they descend,  
And hope speeds with them, to my thoughts I say,—  
“Not for much longer thus shall we converse  
Of love, my thoughts, for like fresh-fallen snow  
This feverish being, that distracts us so,  
Beneath the sun of time will soon disperse ;  
And all will vanish, with life's failing breath,  
Of which its glowing, wasteful, dreams we weave,—  
Delight and tears and laughter we must leave  
Behind us, when we die, but after death  
This grievous riddle haply shall grow plain,  
And we shall see how oft we sighed in vain.”

## A Votary of Love

*From the Italian of Ada Negri*

A VISION of some soul inspired she seemed,  
She went in white, and in her visage wore—  
Like to an Eastern sphinx, serenity ;

Loosened, her hair in a long cascade streamed  
About her body, she superbly bore,  
With the fine indolence of statuary :

She loved and was not loved. Deep in her heart,  
—Although with tranquil brow and tearless eyes—  
Her love she hoarded of the callous one ;

But love consumed her : In the latter part  
Of autumn-time she died, even as dies  
Hot-scented musk that wants the summer sun.



## PART II.



## “A Drunken Satyr”

(*An Antique Marble in the Vatican*)

THIS were a thing hardly to be believed!—  
 That thus constraining marble could express,—  
 With all the ardour of a thought conceived—  
 Sensuous imagination's rare excess,—  
 So figured, by a satyr's drunkenness.

Quite overcome he lies by the wine cup  
 Of nature's everlasting revelry ;  
 What dripping mornings hath not he drunk up,  
 What dewy evenings, for this ecstasy !  
 What foam of fresh clouds frothing in the sky !

What airs hath he inhaled, with goodly smells  
 Of flower, and fruit, and herb, and rain-soaked ground,  
 And sane sea-saltiness from wet weeds and shells  
 Brought by the billowy coursers as they bound  
 Upon the seashore, with a thundering sound !

What mad mirth hath he borrowed of the sun,  
 What thrills of terror from intricate woods  
 Where dwarfish oaks bend double every one,  
 What drollery from squirrels' squabbling broods,  
 What heartbeatings from breathless solitudes !



What piping hath he learned from birds' wild notes,  
What headlong leaping from trout tumbling sheer,  
What grim-faced gambols from rough mountain goats,  
What shadowy fleetness from the fleeing deer,  
What rage, what folly, what delight, what fear !

Satyr, or spirit of fancy, he hath slaked,  
In rich forgetfulness, his ravishing fever,  
And, from the drowsy fit, shall not be waked  
By dull sense of the irksome undeceiver,—  
But in this marble shall dream deep for ever !

## “ Faun and Maiden ”

*(An Antique Marble in the Uffizi Gallery)*

O FAUN, still whispering in the maiden's ear,  
 While hard she hearkens, in a breathless hush,  
 With what bewitching words enchantest her,  
 To make her cheek, even through the marble,  
 flush?—

What god hath sent thee as his messenger,

To say how, not as moody mortals use,  
 Who in walled chambers hide their loves away,  
 To him her virgin treasure she must lose,  
 But, as the careless glad immortals may,  
 Among the streams, woods, skies, lights, shadows,  
 dews!—

Whether at harvest in some reaped field,  
 On whose shorn stubble and long files of sheaves,  
 The moon's disc rises, like a dinted shield,  
 Or in some forest tremulous with leaves,  
 The cold keys of her chastity she yield ;

Or by some hyacinth bank, where low they lean,  
 —As players do o'er some stringed instrument—

To list how, to the bees' hum, intervene  
The smuggled silences of their descent  
Into the flower-bags, whose gold wealth they glean !

Or when, through waves translucent, their forms glow  
Like some bright cloud of the reflected dawn,  
Or, wasted by their warmth, in rivers flow  
About them that were spread as sheets of lawn,  
Some vernal shade's last vestiges of snow !

When? when? at morn, or eve, or night, or noon,  
Shall old Time's measured pulse most madly beat,  
As in that swift embrace at once they swoon,  
With icy tremor, and entrancèd heat !—  
O tedious Faun, how soon ! how soon ! how soon !

## “ La Nascita di Venere ”

(*Botticelli*)

PRINCE of the painters' perished brotherhood,  
 Who lavished on their art the purple dyes  
 Of pansies, and the rose's crimson blood,  
 How like a vapour does thy Venus rise !—  
 Not veiled yet by the fluttering draperies !—

All white and shimmering, from the waves wind-curved,  
 New-woke, and wondering of the things to be,  
 Like thine own mystic mediæval world ;  
 Indeed an Aphrodite,—but not she  
 Who sprang, undying, from the deathless sea ;—

But mild of mien, and pensive-souled, and sad,  
 As the Maid-mother of the Christ thorn-crowned,  
 As though, wide-eyed, some wistful dream she had,  
 And in her ear still were the small shrill sound  
 The swallows make, as swift they circle round !—

The breezes blow about her salt, and sweet,  
 With floating foam, and flowers flung in the air,  
 And like loose fetters, falling to her feet,  
 —A burden for the form a shell can bear—  
 Hang half the sun's rays plaited in her hair !

Sculptors in stone have imaged her, sea-born,  
And Love's frail mould, to be immortal, made,  
But thou hast made her, as the misty morn,  
And as the subtle-shifting light and shade,  
And as a perfect-petalled flower, to fade !

## “ Mammon ”

*(Suggested by the Picture by G. F. Watts)*

O THOU who makest the heart's blood bankrupt,  
 And dull the eye, and hollow the smooth cheek,  
 Who on men's shame and madness full hast supped,  
 And glutted with thy fare, like the gross leek  
 Upon the dung-hill, growest rank and sleek !

Thou who heed'st not the pleadings, sick and hoarse,  
 Of suppliants clinging to thy stubborn knees,  
 Nor carest for their conscience's remorse,  
 While fast thou clutchest at the sinner's fees,  
 Deaf to the clamour, drunk with dregs and lees !

Thou who th' aspiring and straight spirit of man—  
 As mountain-pine the woodman, mak'st to bow,  
 And fall, and fallen, grindest even as bran,  
 Setting thy mark, that all the thing may know,  
 Upon the unlined tablet of his brow !

Mammon ! more hideous than nightmare at noon,  
 On thy gilt throne that gloatest, while beneath  
 Thy vanquished victims lie in extreme swoon ;  
 Who deck'st thy wrinkles with their hopes' green  
 wreath,  
 And surfeitest thyself, with their soul's death !

## Nostalgia

“ . . . ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἡμᾶρ.”  
*Odyssey I.*

O HOME-RETURNING, dear to mortal men,  
That to Ulysses long the gods denied,  
Making him wistful whence 'twould be, and when!  
O hearth, for which, far sojourning, he sighed,  
Longing to see its blue-wreathed smoke again!

Imperious bonds, not to be overcome,  
That bind men to the country of their birth,  
Keeping them captive, though they rove and roam  
Over all lands and oceans of the earth,  
O cruel curse of heart-sickness for home!

Why were we born home-loving, but to learn  
The bitter lot of exile, and outcast  
From lands to which we never must return,  
From all the pleasant places of the past,  
And youth, for whose fresh years our footsteps yearn?

O light, warmth, being, life! from which beneath  
We shall be banished, how shall we endure  
No more to take this proud impulsive breath?—  
No draught of Lethe, long and deep, will cure  
The soul's nostalgia in the shades of death;

But we would rather live to beg our bread,  
Though Pluto's wealth in Hades we might have,  
For well he spake—bowing his pride—who said  
That it were best to be a serf, a slave,  
Of living men, than lord among the dead.



## Two Pictures Compared

(*A Digression*)

THAT idyll of the golden age  
 Of unsophisticated bliss,  
 So glowing on the painter's page,  
 Charms not my fancy like to this,  
 That from it's sprung—by long descent—  
 A scene of cultured souls' content !

The subtle-toned interior,  
 Whose lattice-tempered light and shade  
 Shift mutely, on the marble floor,  
 While on the viols music's made,  
 Much sweeter than, in the old world,  
 Pan ever piped, or streamlet purled.

For men, however they commend  
 Sylvan existence, must confess  
 Its pastimes tedious in the end,  
 Its idle hours a weariness,  
 And, sounding still some meagre note,  
 But comfortless the shepherd's oat !

And, therefore, like the humble-bees  
 The sugared drops that carry home  
 To furnish, by and by, from these  
 The nectar-oozing honey-comb,  
 With essences from nature 'stilled,  
 The store-house of the mind they've filled ;

From natural instinct never learned  
 Culling the laws of curious arts,  
 And with the senses' sweets unearned  
 Mingling the spice of wit and parts,  
 And giving, to nude form, the grace  
 Of flowing silks, and lawn, and lace ;

And from cold juices of the grape,  
 Kindling red wine's reviving fire,  
 And for clay huts of uncouth shape,  
 Building them homes to their desire,  
 Making man's sojourn primitive  
 This sweet civility—to live !

D

## The Deserted Garden

THE pleasance is a waste of weeds,  
 The nimble fountains never play,  
 The moss-grown path no-whither leads;  
 The peaches on the garden wall  
 Ripen untended and decay,  
 Ungathered the red apples fall;

In the stone vase where lilies swayed,—  
 Touching the air with perfume faint,  
 Upon the stone-work balustrade,  
 Rank hemlock dares to raise its stalk,  
 And, with its poisonous petals, taint  
 The fair flag-paven terrace-walk;

Where the lawn's velvet verdure was,  
 For dainty-slippered feet to tread,  
 The prickly thistles choke the grass;  
 Their light seeds by the breeze are blown,  
 So toil-less in its ghostly bed  
 Is Desolation's garden sown;

The dial points its patient finger  
 Unmarked, at the slow-moving hours

Whose idle minutes muse and linger,  
And where the alleys still attest  
How under their close-shaded bowers  
Once lovers' secrets were confest,

A satyr's form, sculptured in stone,  
The ivy with its green has wreathed,  
Its evil power as if to own,  
As though the cruel lips, leer-curved,  
And lustful nostrils, indeed, breathed  
The malice of the old myth-world !

It seems, on this enchanted ground,  
Men's thoughts should pine, and droop apace,  
And in oblivion deep be drowned,  
And that some wonder-workèd change  
Must come upon the form and face,  
Some metamorphose, mute, and strange.

## At Villa d'Este

**GARDEN** of the high-towering cypress trees,  
And tumbling waters, of quaint grotto delves,  
And windings steep down stately terraces,  
Along whose deep-embowered, bosky shelves  
The bay and flowering-myrtle flourishes!

Where each low murmur in a louder 's drowned,  
And that continual dropping, that deceives  
Through all the summer-time the sun-parched ground,  
With noise of rain pattering upon the leaves,  
Is swallowed in the waterfall's great sound!—

How often down the glimmering ilex-grove  
They came and sat here, in the olden day,  
—Knight and fair lady, dallying with sweet love,—  
And so, to feel the fountain's cooling spray,  
Haply a small white hand she would unglove!

How often and how often here they came!  
But now their house has fallen from its pride,  
And though the sparkling waters stream the same,—  
Fed from the never-failing mountain side,  
It is for none of the old noble name.

## “Waiting for the Boats, Schevening”

(*By Josef Israels*)

GRANDMOTHER and granddaughter, side by side,  
Sit by the sea-shore watching, patient-eyed,—  
Waiting until the fishing-boats come in,  
By the gray, sad, hoarse sea of Schevening :

A simple picture of a simple theme ;  
As old age dreameth and as youth they dream ;  
Waiting, as both must wait, on what's unwist,  
And while they learn and see naught, watch and list :

But in the plain and speaking way he tells  
The thing, the poet-painter Israels  
Leaves not to say that Love is still the scout  
That from the eyes of young and old looks out.

## On a Marble Foot

*(A Fragment of Antique Sculpture)*

STRAIGHT, as a sapling from its root,  
The figure of some youth once sprung  
From this ingenuous, shapely, foot  
That bore it,—nimble, joyous, young :

For such the power the sculptor had  
Each part by skill supreme to grace,  
But from a limb one knows the lad  
Was comely of his form and face.

*Vasari records that Michael Angelo once made a group  
of sculpture in snow—"which was superb."*

**MIGHTY**, but as a mortal man alone,  
Servile to cold eternity, he seemed,  
Seeking to prison in perpetual stone  
The sudden splendours that his spirit dreamed ;

But more like God Who not for length of time,  
But for a little moment, a brief day,  
Most perishable things makes most sublime,  
When once, in a surpassing bravery,  
All human weakness he must needs forego  
To make a masterpiece in melting snow !



## In the Forum

If in the Forum much rain fall,  
Wild flowers and grass begin to sprout  
From architrave and capital,—  
By civic care soon rooted out;

And placidly some frog will pipe,  
With a cool fountain's bubbling sound,  
Among the puddles, that they'd wipe  
By perfect drainage from the ground;—

For the the old world of mason's art  
Man cannot leave unvexed a day,  
But thereto Nature will impart  
A spirit of idle poesy.

## On a Statue of Nike

*In the Louvre*

THIS statue of wind-fluttering Victory,  
 Whose form's discerned through the close-clinging  
     vest,  
 Is like the morning that's veiled mistily :

In baser art that draperies did away,  
 The beauty of nude woman is, at best,  
 As disenchanted brightness of mid-day.

## The New Century

SOLE bell, left all forlorn to bear  
 The burden of the waking hour,  
 When life grows of itself aware,—  
 Sleep folded simply as a flower,  
 Faint spirit of the fainting air !

Midnight with cheerful company  
 Of solemn-chanting bells made chime,  
 But thine's the infant hour's frail cry,  
 First wandering from the womb of time—  
 Sad voice of the new century !

We, loving the old world's last age  
 Of sons of the traditioned soil,  
 Look strangely at its altered stage,  
 That's changed, for culture's flameless foil,  
 The rude gems of their heritage ;

That's blighted every pleasant place,  
 Dooming, henceforth, the mason's hand  
 Only to pluck down, and deface,  
 Or with smug insolence to brand  
 The old world's dignity, and grace.

But yet as guests in Time's own house,  
Though mourning so the age deceased,  
To the new age we must carouse,  
And keep with heavy hearts the feast,  
Hanging our halls with holly boughs.

*ἀνάγκη*

**METHOUGHT**, in sleep, one said to me, "Henceforth  
 Men must no more be callèd mean, or great,  
 But all must be esteemed of equal worth,—  
 Clothed not with rags, neither with robe of state ;

"And as men's fortunes, so the human mind  
 Must no more soar to any supreme height,  
 Nor yet be with blank ignorance stark blind,  
 But all must walk in one inglorious light ;

"And as with men themselves, so with their tongue,—  
 It must no more be tuned with curious speech  
 Of prince, and peasant, but its same ill-strung  
 And soulless instrument must serve for each."

And when I would have questioned how this law  
 Was named, henceforth, men must be governed by,  
 Looking upon the scroll he held, I saw  
 New-graven on the seal,—“Necessity.”

## Lazar's Litany

WE, made the metaphor  
Of all high souls abhor,—  
We marked with scab and sore.

We, that must hide for shame,  
While men of foul'st ill fame  
Seek the sun's light, the same,

We, while we draw life's breath,  
Consumed of loathsome death,—  
Jesus of Nazareth !

Thou Friend of vile and base,  
Wilt shun not our disgrace,—  
Son, with the so marred face !

## Cock-crow

Oh harsh cock-crow, flat, and unmusical,  
First knocking at the doors of the closed ears  
Grief-harrowed souls to misery to recall,  
Tired limbs to labour, and sad eyes to tears;

Like to a trumpet from the truce of night  
That rousest us, with unrelenting cry,  
To the forced march, or the uneven fight  
With fates, that over men have mastery;

And as a flame's untempered light that flares  
On tender senses, that at once dost wake  
With the unsealing lids, a load of cares,  
Remorse of conscience, and the heart's dull ache;

And as the loud fog-horn afar that winds  
Its warning blasts to sea-men in distress,  
That daily herald'st to men's cumbered minds,  
The same coast, ruthless, imminent,—consciousness!

*Written after reading (in Hakluyt's Voyages) the accounts given by Job Hortop and Miles Phillips, of their sufferings at the hands of the "hellish holy house."*

SUPPOSE no second life succeed to this,—  
 That all be but a myth of heaven's bliss;  
 But for ourselves who in our time have had  
 But moderate ills, and much to make us glad,  
 I would account it to be well appaid  
 For its own sake, in this sweet world to 've stayed;  
 But for those men for their religion's creed  
 With cruel scourgings who were made to bleed,  
 Who by the "hellish holy-house" were tracked  
 As by blood-hounds, and with grim tortures racked,  
 And haply, if they 'scaped the lighted stake,  
 Years, at the galley's oar, must groan, and ache,—  
 To strange extremities who grew inured,  
 And all that's unendurable endured,  
 Methinks that at the dire fraud I could weep,  
 If death's salve be, indeed, but senseless sleep.





## PART III.



## The Robin

**METHINKS** the simple song the robin sings,  
 More than all other birds',  
 Hath some heartfelftness of sweet human things,  
 Some winningness of words:

The skylark's (when no larger than a moth,  
 He hovers in the sky)  
 All others', for impassioned praise, outdoth,  
 And unbreathed ecstasy,—

Thrushes' and blackbirds', for the fresh delights  
 Of lovers' hearts by day,  
 And nightingales', in anguishing warm nights  
 In the mid-boon of May,—

The swallow's poignant shrill, for love's swift course  
 Pursuing love pursued,  
 The wood-pigeon's, for tenderness grown hoarse  
 To woo, and to be wooed,—

But only in the robin's breast there beats  
 What pitiful mortals know,—  
 The plaintive sweetness of remembered sweets,  
 And loves of long ago.

E—2

## Rooks

THE caw of rooks is, to the inlander,  
As the sea's voice, to dwellers by the sea,  
Its grateful music soundeth all the year,  
And doth with every season well agree !

On a Spring morning, full of mirth it seems,  
And mingling with the misty Autumn noon,  
Maketh more drowsy its gold-drooping beams ;  
With every changeful month it keepeth tune,

From when the pulse of Summer proudly beats,  
And the high-mounting sap is uppermost,  
To when, by starvèd marches, it retreats  
To the stern citadel of Winter's frost !

For the low caw, and creak, of the rooks' cry  
That lulls the inlander the long year round,  
Is native to his homely earth and sky  
As to the sea its never-ceasing sound.

## Starlings

O STARLINGS, from whose glossy throats,  
As glib, and numerous, come the notes,  
As gossamer at morn that floats !

I know not if ye court, or spar,  
But that your songs' beginnings are  
Like water bubbling from a jar !

And then like fountains, as they play,  
That from the liquid flower-stem fray  
Festoons of rainbow-coloured spray !

And then the busy hubbub seems  
A caldron's song, that brews and steams  
While, by the fire, the beldame dreams !

And then as the wild-waxing din,  
When pipe and flute and violin  
Attuning, all at once, begin !—

The nightingale and turtle-dove  
Tell plainly of their grief and love;  
But you have other ways to move,—

You rather, as the poet sings,  
Please us with similes of things  
And whimsical imaginings;

Like painted shadows in a glass,  
The proper substance that surpass,  
Some wizard charm your music has

The fancy by a feint to hold,  
As doth a fable, fresh and old,  
And as a fairy-tale that's told!

## The Skylark

THE song-struck lark more high and high  
Soars, from his dwelling on the ground,  
(As though a plummet in the sky  
Were dropped, its azure deeps to sound);

And ever in sweet frenzy grows  
His music, as he mounteth up,  
Like frantic wine that overflows,  
And, with its frothing, hides the cup;

Till all at once one doubts one's deaf,  
So suddenly he stints to sing,  
Down-eddying like an Autumn leaf,  
That sprang up like the Spirit of Spring!



## The Nightjar's Note

O CRY, thrilled from the nightjar's thirsty throat,  
 Low-croonèd lullaby of waning light,  
 Ominous intervals, that tell by rote  
 The burden of the sultry summer's night!—

The burden of the birds' sweet singing stilled,  
 And the consumèd splendours of the sun;  
 The burden of the summer's day fulfilled,  
 And of the breathless summer's night begun;

Weird utterance, wafted over heath and wood  
 That evening's precious odours impregnate,  
 Whose sound with some vague fear freezes the blood,  
 Like whirring of the spinning-wheel of Fate!

## The Swallow's Note

THE swallow's cry, that's so forlorn,  
By thrush and blackbird overpowered,  
Is like the hidden thorn  
On the rose-bush, deep-bowered :

But when the song of every bird  
Is hushed, in Summer's lull profound,  
And all alone is heard  
Its little poignant sound,

The piteous shrill of its sharp grief  
Seems, in the silence of the air,  
The thorn, without a leaf,  
Upon the rose-bush, bare !

## The Prelude to Day

If at the rising of the sun  
We hear the birds wake, one by one,  
Methinks their busy twittering  
Forebodes what joy day's birth shall bring ;

But if the sullen-voiced corncrake  
The first be heard about daybreak,  
'Tis as a prophecy forlorn  
Of some drear thing to be reborn :

So, after this, if God should give  
Another life to us to live,  
The first sound that we then shall hear,  
Will be our new fate's harbinger,—

Prophetic, if some cheerful noise,  
Of life's resuscitated joys ;  
But, if it be some dismal strain,  
Of life's old ills revived again.

## The Kingfisher

In mellow, frosty, autumn time,  
With mist and dew that drips and steams,  
Whose mornings silvered are with rime,  
And beaten gold its noonday beams,

The brave kingfisher loves to skim  
Along the brown brook, filmed with ice ;  
Not Fancy's self can cope with him  
For gorgeous hues, and quaint device.

## To Snowdrops

THE lovely myth of marble Galatea,  
 A maiden that became,  
 Was writ of thee, chaste flower of the chill year,  
 With wild forebode that set'st our hearts aflame,  
 O Snowdrop, that the snow's own name dost bear!

That worn in Winter's robe of dazzling white,  
 In the snow's mantle, made  
 Of clear-cut crystals, and of diamonds bright,  
 Art by no look betrayed,  
 Nor any wonder dost in us excite;

But in the frost's still world (like that we dream  
 Untouched by love and death)  
 Even as the essence of itself dost seem,  
 Snowdrop, but for thy breath,—  
 Pledged all the earth's dear treasures to redeem!

From whose faint dawn of fragrance we divine  
 The song of birds, deep-bowered,  
 Rare lilies' opiates, and red roses' wine,  
 And that impassioned rush of blood that flowered  
 In her warm cheek, before as wan as thine!

## Dead Leaves

THESE shrivelled leaves that crisp along the ground,  
 That erst with their low rustling woo'd the sky,  
 Put me in mind of the poor meagre sound  
 With which men mock the speech of days gone by :

So when I read the poesy of old,  
 By fervent Sappho, or sad Bion, sung,  
 I grieve to think what music manifold  
 Lies lost, for ever, in their golden tongue ;

And how like to these leaves (now rough with rime)  
 When April their green foliage fresh unfurled,  
 Their songs were, on grave paths of after-time  
 Down-strewn from the sweet Summer of the world.

## Autumn Poppies

THESE sanguine poppies of pale Autumn-time  
That have outstayed the prime,  
Whose waves of crimson erst  
The wolds immersed,  
Are like last drops of blood  
From Frenzy's flood !

These feverish poppies, that in fields long bare  
Heed not the chill late air,  
Are like the flames tears drench,  
But cannot quench,  
Sparks from the smouldering fire  
Of dead desire !

These poppies flashing blood-red to the brim  
Through vapours veiled and dim,  
Like glasses are that shine  
With glowing wine,  
Whose last draught he that drinks  
In Lethe sinks !

These poppies still left burning here and there  
In fields ablaze that were,

Like lamps are at a feast  
Where mirth increased,  
The last men's eyes that keep  
From envious sleep !

These few, proud, poppies, that with fearless breath  
Defy the frosts of death,  
Are Passion's flowers that last  
Forget the past,  
A handful at the most  
That were a host !



## Autumn Violets

VIOLETS of sweetest Spring!  
 With breath impassioned as a lover's vow,  
 From Springtime when primrose and hyacinth blow,  
 The message that ye bring  
 O breathe not now!

Still for the flower-robbed earth  
 There's rosemary, and thyme, and cloistral sage,  
 With which chill days no jealous warfare wage,  
 Make not to seem a dearth  
 Their foliage!

Calm is the air as death,  
 From the dark soil, where the dead leaves lie strewed,  
 The smell of Autumn steals, grateful and good,—  
 Murder not, with your breath,  
 Its peace, half-woo'd!—

Life were for me enough,  
 And the grave joys that on its mid-way wait,  
 Fain would I friends be with my quiet fate,—  
 Kill me not, Sweet, with love  
 That comes too late!

## Sea and Shore

WHEN by the verge transfixed I stand  
 Of the salt beach,—  
 There where, for ever, sea and land  
 Gaze each at each,

Methinks the land, that's never roved,  
 Beside the sea,  
 Must long, itself, so swayed and moved,  
 And swift to be!—

And that the waves cast on the strand,  
 That cannot change,  
 Must long to be like to the land  
 And never range:—

For so the soul and flesh still crave,  
 And still deplore  
 Each other's fates, like shore and wave  
 And wave and shore!

F

## The Four Seasons

I saw the year's four seasons pass  
 Like bridal couples two and two,  
 Clear-mirrored in my fancy's glass,  
 And this is how I saw them go:—

Spring, with a garland in her hair,  
 Walked by the side of Midsummer;  
 And none might look upon the pair  
 But they must envy him and her;—

His brow was wreathed from earth's green bower,  
 With locks like clouds about it curled,—  
 Her face was like the opening flower  
 Of love, that sweetens all the world;

And I saw Autumn, a pale bride,  
 With hectic flush in her faint cheek,  
 Walk sad and wistful, by the side  
 Of Winter, witless grown and weak;—

So round the trunk of some dead tree  
 A trailing briar-rose I've beheld,—  
 I wept that one lovely as she  
 Should lean upon the arm of old!

## “ Carillon ”

(DELFT)

SWEET bells, as all the hours go by,  
 Your plaintive burthen that renew,  
 As though the so-absorbèd sky  
 Were listening all day long to you !—  
 Suited to every time and tense  
 Your carol's quaint inconsequence !

From the slim tower's ascending flights  
 Your notes come, tentative, and thin,—  
 As when from misty mountain heights  
 Is heard the strayed flock's tinkling din ;  
 Some faintness of the frozen air  
 Their tones keep, delicate, and rare :

Sweet bells, that in your belfry swarm,  
 Like bees close-clustered in the hive,—  
 Your music hath some faëry charm,  
 Futile, and frail, and fugitive,  
 That none may master its refrain  
 No more than of the fall of rain !

F—2

Sad little bells, whose sounds come hoarse  
With use of centuries of years,  
Like heart-beats broken by remorse,  
Or voices tremulous with tears,—  
The old world, in your wandering notes,  
Upon the days forgotten dotes !

## Divisions on a Ground

*Written for the harpsichord by J. J. Rameau*

WHAT sad confessions do they make  
 So plaintively out-poured,  
 This theme's divisions that awake  
 The wizard harpsichord?

What is it that this old air saith,—  
 Said in so many ways,  
 As ever it meandereth  
 In its sweet mournful maze?

What fever wastes it that makes warm  
 The fretful twangling keys,  
 Like sudden Summer bidding swarm  
 The brazen-wingèd bees?

What lamp of magic splendour's lit  
 In its dim-curtained gloom,  
 That moody fancies burn in it  
 Their wings of damask bloom?

What doth it say of death or love  
 That when the music's over—  
 The hearts of men it so could move,  
 They're weeping they discover?

## To Fidele

LET not my corse, my faithful one,  
 By pomp be followed when I'm dead;—  
 Triumphs are for Love alone—  
 For bridal, not the grave's cold bed:  
 Those pearls dropped for me from your eyes  
 Would shame an emperor's obsequies:

No writing set, in burnished brass,  
 To say where my poor ashes lie,—  
 Asking of all men, as they pass,  
 An alms for pity's charity;  
 For your true grief so great will be  
 No stranger's need be begged for me:—

Nor would I riches vainly spent  
 My fleeting memory to enfold,—  
 For the most costly monument  
 Of alabaster, smooth, and cold,  
 Would be a mockery, a disgrace,  
 To the mute pallor of your face.

## No 'Memento Mori'

BLINDFOLD the stars, undimmed  
 That burn their quenchless fires,—  
 And let the lamp be trimmed  
 That in a night expires;—

For they will shine the same  
 When age consumes those eyes,  
 But its faint flickering flame  
 Will waste ere morning rise!

Come, all in white arrayed,  
 Adorned with flowers alone,—  
 But come not decked, sweet maid,  
 With gems of dazzling stone;—

For they would vaunt, in spite,  
 Their cold eternity,  
 To vex our joy this night  
 With its inconstancy:

And let the clamorous clock  
 Be hushed, that by its chime  
 Would this sweet hour mock  
 With records of gray time!



## Venice

**“VENICE!”** that name, even in thine own sweet  
speech,

Hath not the magic of this name of ours,—  
Smooth as the waters where thy domes and towers  
Lie mirrored quite away from the sea’s reach!—

City with cool reflections paved, that pass  
Like floating vapours, or for ever pause,  
By bridge, and palace, like bright cloudy flaws  
In the clear jewel of thy liquid glass!—

Belike thou think’st by us, of the stern north,  
Thy stately grace may not be understood,  
Unmindful how our fancy’s ardent mood  
With its dim, phantom, splendours decks thee forth:—

Venice, that kindled Turner’s soul to flame,  
—To Canaletto but a curious theme—  
Have we not dreamt of thee a golden dream  
Who named thee with this quivering, queenly, name!

## To the Steppe

O STEPPE, that I have never seen,  
 Shall never see,—  
 Shining with bladed grass's sheen,  
 Without a tree  
 To check the wind's course, swift, and keen !

O Steppe, that nothing hast to screen  
 The sky from thee,  
 But clouds, like whales that swim between,  
 Whose shadows flee,—  
 On which no lingering shadows lean !

The grasshoppers from thy cool green  
 Must troll their glee,  
 And quail and partridge there, I ween,  
 Native should be,—  
 Whose notes with tingling grass agree :

O Steppe, that liest like the broad sea  
 Bare to Heaven's ken,  
 Surely wild horses scour thee,—  
 Not scourged by men,  
 But spacious spirits, frantic, free !

## The Moated House

STILL in a two-fold house I live,—  
 For sheer below its shadow falls,  
 And to its wan, moss-mouldering, walls  
 A wizard grace the waters give:

And gazing on its lines that lie  
 Clear-traced in those translucent glooms,  
 I wonder what peace-paven rooms  
 Complete the shining masonry!

And ever in the limpid glass  
 I pore, and through its faery world  
 I watch the phantom clouds unfurled,  
 In printless pageants, as they pass.

And swift-winged swallows shrilling skim  
 —Like plaintive words—its pensive deep,  
 And silver dace—like dreams in sleep—  
 Flash through its twilight dense and dim:

And were the magic moat away,  
 And its moist-mirrored fabric gone,  
 The house alone to look upon  
 Were but a thing of crumbling clay:—

So life, methinks, itself were nought,  
But for its image in the soul,—  
Through whose wide spaces many a shoal  
Of dumb desires wend in and out.

## The House in the Moat

(A VARIATION)

THE mirrored image in the moat  
Is fairer than the house above,  
And best it's painted pile I love,  
'Twixt fluent wave, and cloud afloat !

Its shining walls like agate show  
In the still sunlit waters seen,  
With water-mosses, in between,  
That in the moist transparence grow ;

But if in shadow, their rich dye  
Glow through the weeds' dark-waving plumes,  
Like some gay scene that's worked on glooms  
Of sombre-tinted tapestry ;

Its phantom fabric quite deceives  
The swallows, that for entrance skim,  
And shoals of silver fishes swim  
Amazed, about its magic eaves !

And on the picture, if one pore,  
And let the curious fancy dwell,  
More potent ever grows the spell,  
The wonder ever waxeth more :

For still within its flawless glass,—  
Fairer than stone or marble, gleams  
The house that's made of golden dreams,  
Whose printless threshold none may pass !

## Daybreak

WHEN Day restores its wholesome light  
Scatter, like bee-swarm from a hive,  
The stars that hang in heaven by night,  
And now will shoot like things alive ;

Then, like swan's feather, flies the moon,  
And witches leave their muttering,  
And mournful sounds, by night that swoon,  
Are turned to skylarks' carolling !

The ghosts, that walk at midnight, shrink  
Ere cock-crow to their graves again,  
The things that, in the night, men think  
Are brushed, at morning, from the brain :

For, at night-time, the tingling air  
With riddles teems, of time, and death,—  
More troublesome than the night-mare  
That sleepers' wits bewildereth :

And ever if one watch or wake  
Ere ruddy dawn the dark relumes,  
His fancy free he cannot shake  
Of its close, terror-curdling, fumes :

But when anew the Morning beams  
That rims the cheerful east with red,  
They vanish, like the idle dreams  
That vex the head upon the bed !



## Love or Hallucination?

THE birds must wonder in the air  
 To see bright fishes of the deep,—  
 When salmon up the stream that fare  
 Against the foaming torrent leap;  
 But when the silver flash has gone  
 May puzzle what they gazed upon!

The fishes in the watery glooms,  
 A halcyon bathing that behold,  
 May marvel at her gorgeous plumes  
 In emerald dyed and blue and gold,  
 But ere the ripple left's erased  
 Admire more why they were amazed!

Shepherds who, in the heavenly sphere,  
 Have watched a shower of stars take flight,  
 Will look that others should appear;  
 But then if none they view all night,—  
 So uneventful seem the skies,  
 Will say 'twas their deceived eyes!

So Love, when, from the Immortals come,  
He's met with in the lives of men,  
With splendour makes them blind and dumb ;  
But after that he's gone again  
They know not if some god they've seen,  
Or but as dreamers if they've been !

## To V.

To her be dedicate  
Fancy, that lurks in wait  
Beneath the folds of Fate!

Beauty, that hidden lies  
From the first glance of th' eyes,  
To sweeten its surprise!—

Gemmed feathers of the jay,  
Their jewels that display  
Just as he flies away,—

Moths' wings, like missals scrolled  
With capitals of gold,  
That sombre covers fold,—

The lapwing's spritely crest,  
She raiseth when at rest,  
In danger that's deprest,—

The perch's fanlike frill,  
He maketh flexible  
Or starcheth, at his will,—

The gray eft's golden brand,  
 Like flame from ashes fanned,  
 He hideth sprawled i' the sand,—

Lining of willow leaves,  
 Whose silver none perceives  
 Unless the air sigh heaves,—

The glow-worm's lustrous spark,  
 That in the day none mark  
 That burneth in the dark!—

All chary things that chide  
 Their treasures keep close hid,  
 To charm but when they bid!—

To her, who's subtle grace  
 Not spied first in a space  
 Fastens one to her face;

Whose fingers magical  
 Fays from the deep can call  
 Men's spirits to enthrall!

## The Lover's Vigil

My soul, that keepeth vigil for my saint,  
Is like a sombre chapel ere sunrise ;—  
A solitary chapel, chill and faint,  
Lit by low-burning tapers of mine eyes !

But when she cometh, as the morning Light  
Whose wings against its burning windows beat,  
The grey and ghostly phantom of the night,  
Flies, from the flagstones, fervent with her feet !

## Of Pluto's Pomegranate

WHAT bloom, I wonder, had the flower  
Whose petals for that fruit were shed,  
Compared to which life's self were sour,—  
So sweet 'twas sought among the dead?

I think that it was dreamy-faced  
Like you, and like your breath its breath,  
And like your kiss the fruit, whose taste  
Would make one seek it, though from death!

## To Dewdrops and Stars

DEW-DROPS, that dream upon the grasses,  
Why do ye tremble when she passes?—  
Far better, at her touch, to waken,  
Than as the toll of day be taken !

Dewdrops, fast caught in her hair's ne  
Of finest wires, why do ye fret?—  
'Twere better faint, in gyves of theirs  
Than glisten, on the gossamers !

Bright stars, at evening still that rise,  
And all night sparkle in the skies,  
Why, in the heavens, hang ye each  
Of your rare gems so far from reach,

And will not from night's dusky zone  
Let fall for her fair neck one stone?—  
'Twere better in that dawn a spark  
Than captain jewel of the dark !

## Tempting Limitations

As dreams impetuous yearn to pass  
 Beyond the baffling gates of sleep,  
 As fishes through the frozen glass  
 Pine for a passage, in the deep,

As, fruitlessly, against the pane  
 A swallow seeking freedom flies,  
 So my soul spends itself in vain  
 To reach the soul that's in your eyes!

## “The Marriage of True Minds”

WHAT binds the skylark to the dappled sky,  
 The seagull to the sea,—  
 So strong and unconstraining be the tie  
 That bindeth thee and me!



## Love's Candles

THE stars I praise not,—but your eyes,  
Not made for lingering centuries,  
But for one little hour to shine  
On this brief love of yours and mine !

Not heaven's candles hold I dear,—  
Hung to illumine an hemisphere,  
But those, by which they're all outshone,  
That burn their lights for me alone !

## A Ballad

THE lady Vanity doth call  
 Unto her waiting-maid,  
 To have to her the mirror, all  
 With lustrous gems inlaid.—

Her eyes not on the jewels dwell,  
 But in the mirror trace,  
 (As in the bottom of a well,)  
 The wonder of her face ;—

She poreth deeper and more deep  
 Upon her peerless eyes,—  
 As though in them she had a peep  
 Of blesséd Paradise,

And like Narcissus courting death,  
 Who thought his lips to've kist—  
 Kills her sweet image with her breath,  
 That doth the mirror mist :

Then, pride-sick, of the devil she prays  
 A glass of flawless foil,  
 Sells him her soul, but her own gaze  
 To see there without soil.—

The mirror's had to her again,  
Her image in it whole,  
Her breath its beauty cannot stain,—  
The devil hath her soul!

## **PART IV.**



## Reminiscences of Childhood

Oh meadows, where were wont to camp,  
White mushrooms, rosy-gilled,  
At dawn we gathered, dewy-damp,—  
Until the basket filled!—

Oh! Autumn's mellow-dripping wood,  
Where many a vizored nut  
We stripped of all its hardihood,—  
When not one nearly shut ;

And every squirrel's lightest leap,  
Or wood-pecker's least tap,  
Would add another to the heap  
On the turf's mossy lap!—

Oh stagnant ponds, where we could watch,  
Beneath the alder's shade,  
The caddis walk in shell-stuck thatch,  
The water-scorpion wade,

Or look for clammy efts that lie  
 Under wet stones asprawl,  
 With arched neck and greed-glittering eye  
 Marking their dull prey crawl,

Or light on tattered tissue-case  
 The dragon-fly had cast,—  
 Who then on wings of finest lace  
 Haply went flashing past!—

Oh sandy-floored or shingled beach  
 Where, flat beneath the sun,  
 Strange wares were spread to warp and bleach,  
 Where we had never done

With seeking self-found amethyst,  
 And searching sea-weed heaps  
 For charmèd things, like alchemyst  
 In cell forbidden keeps!—

Uncanny shapes of claws and fins,  
 And bossy-armoured crust  
 Of hollow crab, and wizen skins,  
 And shipwrecked spoils arust!—

Oh cherished pets, with fur or scales  
 Or feathered that we kept,  
 In cage and coop and pots and pails,  
 That swam and hopped and crept!—

The halting raven, black as pitch,  
 On fearful things that fed,—  
 We knew indeed some wicked witch  
 And often wished were dead !

The parrot with coy-piercing eyes  
 And parti-coloured cheek,—  
 We thought some elf-prince in disguise,  
 Nor wondered he could speak !

The toad deformed as those that croak  
 At dusk on Lethe's wharf,  
 In our gay court of creature folk  
 That served for dumpish dwarf!—

Oh fair world of the nursery floor,  
 Where staring-eyed and stark,  
 The beasts lay scattered by the score  
 Out of the Noah's ark !

Where tops, bright-belted used to spin  
 Like dancing dervish round,  
 Till dazed, at last, with helpless din  
 They rattled on the ground !

Where marbles rolled, like frozen spheres  
 With rainbow chasms rent,  
 Or crystal balls, whence wizard seers  
 Can conjure Time's event !—



Oh childhood dear that, well I wot,  
None more than I enjoyed,—  
By me be sung, ere quite forgot,  
Your sweets that never cloyed !

## In the Farmyard

FOR me there's still a sleepy charm  
 To sit, as child I used to do,  
 And hear the noises of the farm  
 That all at six and seven go.

The crow, breath-spraining, of the cock,  
 That never bursts its brazen springs—  
 Like the alarum of a clock  
 That through a room of china rings;

The geese's cackle, the hen's cluck,  
 As with her chicklings she proceeds,  
 The "quack-quack" of sleek-plumaged duck,  
 Squabbling for slimy waterweeds;

The pigeons courting on the roofs,  
 The squeals and scampering round the sty  
 Of little pigs, with hard-nailed hoofs,  
 The sleeping sow's half-woken sigh;

The mild cows mooing from their stalls  
 At milking-time,—for every noise  
 Some passive sense to me recalls  
 Of childhood's ruminating joys.

H

## Shadow-Shapes

Folk talk of pictures in the fire,  
 But I know little what they mean,  
 Although I am the last to tire  
 With watching its same winter scene;—

For the charred logs, and wan ash bed,  
 Are like to rigid soil and snow,—  
 The smoke, the rising mist, the red,  
 The winter's frosty sunset glow :

But of those weird shows the flames wave  
 Upon the walls none says enough,  
 Nor those grotesques that keep so grave  
 About us, till the lights we snuff;—

More wonder-strange than any dream  
 —With waking senses seen withal—  
 Not Fuller's self the stubbornst theme  
 Could make more shrewd and whimsical !

## Midsummer in the Meadow

**HARK** to the steady hum and stir  
From the long grass of midsummer,

Where hordes of brilliant insects buzz  
Among the blades and balls of fuzz !—

Myriads of sorts the sun's heat brings,—  
With vibrant metal-veinèd wings,—

Beetles with smooth bronze-lacquered shards,  
Or spotted like a pack of cards,—

All species of resplendent flies,—  
Some with green bodies, and great eyes

Pricking like pins' heads from their holes  
Like tiny incandescent coals !

But from the largest to the least  
All come in full trim to the feast,

Pranked in their tinsel, gaudy gay,  
For life's excursion of a day.

H—2

## A "Wise Passiveness"

I love to lie prone in the grass  
And watch the clouds above me pass,

As though I lay in fancy's sleep,  
And felt wild dreams across me sweep,

Or at the bottom of the sea,  
And all its waves went over me !

## Foreign and Familiar

**HOME** and abroad are like two picture books,  
On which, like children still, one looks

Abroad (the new one) moves most appetite  
To see, but soon palls on the sight,

But home (the old one) hath the sovereign art  
To charm by being known by heart!



## PART V.





## To Song

HAD I a lover, he  
Would envy thee,—

If he should ever know  
I loved thee so!

O wooer in the green  
Of thought unseen,

That comest me to meet  
With wingèd feet,

When I—the long forgot—  
For thee look not!

Without thee each fair sight  
Wanteth delight,

And flowers of most rare smell  
No message tell,

And all the wild wind says  
Is nothingness,

And all the sweet birds sing  
Mere carolling!

Thou much more dear to me  
Than Love could be,

Why wilt thou ever stray  
So far away,

Or leave me for so long,  
Spirit of Song?

## Nature's Tautology

If Nature, as meseems, repeats  
Her fancy's favourite conceits,

From pansies' petals I surmise  
She stole the fans of butterflies ;

From grass that seeds or thistledown  
Clouds of gnats curtseying up and down ;

And from the smooth nutshell that guards  
The soft nut, beetles' polished shards ;

From moss and lichen, damask cloth  
And markings of the tiger-moth :

And many things too I can trace  
For copies in my sweet one's face,

For in the rosebud I could seek  
The perfect pattern of her cheek,

Besides I know that chestnuts wear  
The very colours of her hair,—

But still those eyes I must pass by  
To prove her her own plagiary.

## Wind and Thunder

'Tis fearful when the heavens are wroth  
With Earth, and send the mad wind forth,  
And when trees sigh, and houses moan,  
And they themselves are mute, alone:—

But 'tis more dreadful when the sky  
Is with itself at enmity,—  
For then opprobrious cloud with cloud,  
Losing their dumbness, scold aloud!

## Day's Departing

**THE** rooks that caw round dying day  
Put me in mind of waves that play  
About a ship they bear away ;

And as their flagging clamours fail  
I say, "She hath not far to sail,  
And soon she will be out of hail."

## The Seasons of Life

If Nature's images have any truth,—  
If spring be like man's youth,

And Midsummer that full-blown sweets oppress,  
Like prime of life no less,

And mellow Autumn like maturity,—  
Rapt to rare ecstasy,

Methinks that old age, reverend and grave,  
Much cheerfulness should have,

Like those bright days bristling with brittle rime  
Of barren Winter-time.

## At the Sign of "Death"

As it befalls when we have travelled far,  
And tired out with our journey are,  
When we halt at the hostel of some town,  
And (though broad day) to sleep lie down  
An hour or so will seem an age's length,—  
Sleep with the wearied hath such strength:  
Methinks, when all life's long rough way we've been,  
And reached at last Death's quiet inn,—  
Though but some few days at his house we lie,  
'Twill seem more like a century!



## April Morning

By myriads now wild hyacinths wake,  
And hairy trunks of ferns close-curved,—  
Like to the hooded cobra-snake  
Have either side wide fans unfurled :

The shadow-leaves upon the ground  
Shake with as wild an ecstasy,  
(Although they're swayed without a sound)  
As the green leaves against the sky :

The forest-trees are full of sap,  
And from an old oak's hollow sheath,  
The woodpecker's repeated rap,  
Some withered fable seems of death !

## October Morning

THE grass a gloze of satin wears  
From all the sliding gossamers,  
And on the hedge of damask yew  
The cobwebs are bepearled with dew ;—

The shattered leaves lie bronzed with wet,  
And round each shadowy silhouette  
Of browsing beast the sun that shines  
A halo of rough hair defines ;—

Along the brook the king-fisher  
Shoots like a gem-flash here and there,  
Or plumes herself like Beauty's dream  
Fresh bathed in the immortal stream !

## December Evening

Now stars, betimes, begin to twire,  
Fanged Winter shows his sharp white teeth,  
The sun goes down much like a fire  
That gipsies kindle on a heath,

The silhouette of the bare twigs  
And roosting birds, one might believe  
Were some first tree, with sprouting figs,  
Or last, where clustering filberts cleave.

## The Verges of Night

HERE in the north world dusk and dawn  
Deep tints take through the clouds' fine lawn,  
Like fans of "admiral" butterflies  
That on the verge reveal their dyes :

But in the tropics, I conceive,  
That day and night alternate heave  
Like "emperors," that bewray no mark  
Of splendour through their damask dark.

## The Full Moon

THE full moon, first, of downy fluff,  
Seems like a dandelion globe,  
That pouting Zephyr with a puff  
Hath here and there begun to probe;

Then like a coin of antique mint  
With weird device half worn away,  
Of tarnished silver takes the glint,  
As the gray dusk makes dull the day;

But, in the dark ,begins to gleam,  
And toward the middle of the night  
Hath tranced, in a most wondrous dream,  
The world with its suffused light!

## London Fog

Now folk go on the frozen Thames,  
Thick darkness dogs the steelèd frost,  
The Strand by stifled glimpses stems  
The looming fog where London's lost :

And as the ochre wanes to dun,  
Above the high roofs overhead—  
Like a flayed orange the round sun  
Rides through the choking air blood-red.

## To My Wandering Fancies

As the bee in coat of fur,  
Fans of finest gossamer  
Spreadeth to the gusty gale,  
Down the steep crag's side to sail,  
For the sake of the sweet drop  
In the "rest-plough's" purple crop,—  
Wide, my thoughts, spread your frail wings  
To the moving breath of things;  
Though invisible they'll bear  
You in safety, everywhere,  
Like the bee borne by the wind  
Or like fishes, flimsy-finned,  
Through the vastness of the waves  
And clear void of Neptune's caves!

## Death's Visitants

As, come from far, a curious traveller  
Who visits some old castle of renown,  
Is loth to leave and fain to linger there,—  
But by the surly porter 's hurried on,

So we methinks, after dear life's decease,—  
Having gained death, of difficult access,  
Will find it hard from that sure House of Peace  
So soon to shift to dusty nothingness !



## Time's Scythe

THE mower's sharp and curvèd scythe  
That, from his sinewy shoulder swung,  
Oft of the field hath ta'en its tithe,  
In Winter like a trophy's hung :

And from the bough of some old yew  
Suspended then, its shining blade  
Grows dull with undried drops of dew,  
And sullen in the sleepy shade.—

So when, at last, hath fallen to dust  
This fleeting flower of mortal breath,  
Time's restless scythe shall hang arust,  
Unheeded on the tree of death.

## Time

LIKE to a shepherd boy, sweet Time,  
Our days thou tendest, in the prime,  
While yet the years are fresh and few,  
Leading them still to pastures new;

Yet thou at last, like a gray-beard,  
This flock that thine own hand hath reared,  
Thy crook, converted to a goad,  
Wilt urge along death's dusty road!

## Pamela

PAMELA, in powdered hair,  
Not a whit like winter shows,—  
But with April must compare  
When the apple-blossom blows!

## A Fable Found True

'Twas fabled well that the she-bear,  
 With her tongue tireless  
 Licking her cubs, by love doth wear  
 To shape their shapelessness :—

For from the uncouth brood of thought  
 The poets, from of old,  
 With touches but by nature taught,  
 Their masterpieces mould.

## A Wished Metempsychosis

OH, to be  
 A wild wood-pigeon on a windy day !—  
 In summer, in the sea,  
 A dolphin, making splashing waves display ;—  
 A hermit in the winter ; and to be  
 A maiden fair in May !

## The Poet's Art

As goldsmith on his cunning work,  
Sometimes I gloat on what I've writ,  
The quick fires in its words that lurk  
The quaint device enchased in it :

And even as he if he have wrought  
Some lady, necklace rare, or ring,  
So I am glad to see my thought  
So splendid in the stately thing.

## Beauty, always in its Element

HER lips with coral may compare,  
Who in the sea seems a sea-thing,  
With that fine seaweed that's her hair,  
Those twin shells to her breasts that cling:—

But in the garden's verdurous gloom,  
If that one sees her walk, one swears  
In either cheek a red rose-bloom,  
Each tress of blinding gossamers.

## “Princesse Lointaine”

'Twas here I read that pleasant tale  
Of Rostand's, “Princesse Lointaine,”  
And when my eyes spied out a sail,  
(Raised from the page now and again)  
That was the happy, ship I said,  
That to that far-off country sped!—

Here, as I breathed the mingled smell  
Of sea-pinks, and of briny waves,  
And listened to their surge and swell  
Glutting the grotts of cool sea-caves;  
And I must think it charmed me more  
To read it so by the sea-shore.

## Rondel

*From the old French of Charles d'Orléans*

"Le Temps a laissé son manteau"

THE Weather's left his cloak to wear  
Of wind and fog and drizzling rain,  
And goes in broidered robe again  
Of brave sunshine beaming and clear!

Now not a bird or beast you hear  
But in his jargon it saith plain,—  
"The Weather's left his cloak to wear."

And running brook and stream appear  
With sparkling ripples in their train,  
Like gems in a bejewelled chain;  
Now everyone goes handsomer,  
The Weather's left his cloak to wear!

## Rondel

“ Allez vous en, allez, allez,  
 Soussi, soing et merencolie.”  
*Charles d'Orléans.*

GET you packing, get you gone,  
 Melanch'ly, with Dumps and Care,  
 Think you I will always bear  
 With you as afore I've done ?

Rout you Reason will each one  
 If to daunt her you should dare,  
 Get you packing, get you gone,  
 Melanch'ly, with Dumps and Care.

But should you return anon  
 And with you the dismal pair,  
 The plague take you be my prayer ;  
 And take that that brings you on,  
 Get you packing, get you gone.



## The Daisy

*(Ballade from Froissart).*

FIRST of all flowers men ever rank the rose,  
 Then in the violet methinks most delight,  
 Some praise the lily, some the pale primrose,  
 The iris, or the glistering aconite,  
 And many love the clove-pinks, freaked with red,  
 The peony, and poppy with bowed head,  
 Each flower some sturdy champion hath for it,  
 But to the daisy still my heart is wed,  
 And of all flowers this flower's my favourite!

For in all weathers if it rains or blows,  
 No matter if the day be dull or bright,  
 This little flower as sweet and winsome shows  
 With its same crown of leaves, crimson and white,  
 With petals shut, opening, or wide dis-spread,  
 It never aileth or looks drooped or dead;  
 Goodness and meekness in its face are writ,  
 And therefore to the Daisy my heart's wed,  
 And of all flowers this flower's my favourite!

## PART VI.

K



## To Her Gown, on Laying It By

DEAR gown that he has known me in,  
 Whom well I pleased a little space,  
 You're blameless, though I could not win  
 His love,—yours was a faultless grace!—

For, so much folly to confess,  
 I chose you curiously, with care,—  
 Because I think much comeliness  
 Accrues from comely clothes we wear.

I'll warrant you became me well,—  
 At once we seemed so long allied,  
 And, by the way your straight folds fell,  
 To do me honour seemed your pride!—

I wonder you should still seem new,  
 For though indeed, if they be told,  
 The times I wore you were but few,  
 My heart, in the same while, grew old;

And seeing fashions ever change,  
 And never at the mean remain,  
 Next year you might be counted strange,—  
 But never you'll be worn again;

K—2

You shall not feel the empty scoff  
Of fools for antiquated worth,  
Nor, as fine clothes the rich leave off  
To paupers, move incongruous mirth,

But in the chest, where you must lie,  
You shall be laid like a lost friend,  
For with you too must be put by  
Those sweets, that had so soon an end.

## The Land of Heart's Desire

WHICH would I have, for my heart's home,  
A land loved by the sun,  
Where wild-bees fill the honeycomb  
With love's sweets everyone :  
Only its proud and prosperous beams  
Make melancholy droop and dreams ?

Or would I have, for my dear heart,  
A land loved by the rain,—  
Where not for long the sad clouds part  
And soon are met again,—  
Where fortunate love hath never been,  
But ever Fancy keepeth green ?

## Metaphor

He, that hath loved, needs not to eat  
 Of luscious honeycomb to tell  
 How in the bosom it grows sweet,  
 For love will teach it him as well.

He, that with grateful flattery glows,  
 Wists the bewitching warmth of wine,  
 And he, that tastes repentance, knows  
 How bitter is the taste of brine.

He need not feel the scorpion's sting,  
 Who venom'd jealousy hath felt,  
 Nor stoned to be, whom Fortune's sling  
 Some sudden cruel blow hath dealt.

He, by remorse consumed and shamed,  
 No cancer needs to have to learn  
 What 'tis to bear a growth inflamed,  
 And in the flesh to feel it burn :

Nor can the sense try pleasures more  
 Or pains more than the soul hath tried,  
 For sense is but the metaphor  
 Meant to the soul to be applied.

## The Legend of Love

Love on the ground looked, and the sweet flowers  
grew,

Love at the skies looked, and the stars came out,  
Love listened, and the mild air music blew,  
Love slept, and dreams gathered dark sleep about :

Love on man's face looked, and so first the fire  
Of heavenly light kindled in either eye,  
Breathed on the heart, and brought forth sweet desire,  
Upon the brain, and begat—poesy.



## Residua

WHAT is past summer's green ?  
 A scent of mouldering leaves !  
 What's beauty that hath been ?  
 A thought the mind conceives !

What's quenched love one recalls ?  
 A feather on a plain,  
 From a bird's wing that falls,—  
 Not used for flight again !

## A Law of Stealth

WHO hath seen Love come or go?—  
 Who hath seen  
 The buds burst, or the blossoms blow,  
 Or grass get green ?

Who of the swallows' flight's aware,  
 Or the last leaves',—  
 Though all observe the boughs, grown bare,  
 The silent eaves ?

## Love Invited

O LOVE if thou wouldst come once more  
To kindle me,  
Thou shouldst more bravely than before  
Entreated be :—

Nor would I blame thee, kingly Love,  
Or call thee blind,  
Though haply my new flame should prove  
A fate unkind,—

For I should think myself well paid  
But once again,  
To feel with thy sweet fear afraid,—  
Pierced by thy pain !

## Finis

DEAR days of blessèd easeful grief,  
When the big merciful drops like rain,  
To the heart's dryness brought relief,—  
Dear boon that must not be again!

For one not loved, who loved alone,  
That poor ill-prospered love he's lost,  
To soothe his spirit may bemoan  
A little week or month at most ;—

Some tears on love's grave he may shed,  
But when he's laid grief in the ground,  
When blessèd easeful grief is dead,  
He may not weep or make a sound.

## Reverie

THAT time when Love was newly slain,  
And grief sat in his stead,  
I shall not dream of even again,  
For both alike are dead ;

But still my wandering thoughts will range,  
That old quaint town—altho'  
I've never been there—steep and strange,  
Where then I thought to go,—

Because I said that to my mind  
Much solace it would bring  
To leave the wonted look behind  
Of each familiar thing,

And saunter down its straggling street,  
White then with winter-time,  
And hear the sound of wood-soled feet,  
And the clock's crazy chime ;

And sometimes as from sleep I start,  
To see so plain the scene  
Of that old town built in my heart,—  
Where I have never been.

## Winged or Petalled?

**LIKE** white blooms blossomed in a row  
 The pigeons on the pine-bough show,  
 Then, all at once, if one come nigh,  
 Away the wingèd things will fly!—

And so, belike, when Death shall fray  
 Our spirits, they will fly away,  
 And birds of passage prove to be,  
 That seemed but flowers on Life's green tree.

## Love Regretted

Nor for Love's joys I sigh "Alas,"  
 But even that his pains must pass,  
 That as his toll, 'tis like, next year,  
 I shall not pay a single tear ;—  
 The snow will fall upon the ground,  
 But nowhere his footprints be found.

## The Fates, Two

IN Genoa, that burns and broods  
In brazen sun and bronzed shade,  
I saw how went, selling their goods,  
An old crone, and a blooming maid,  
Calling, in their alternate cries,  
The things that everybody buys:

And as I watched them, with their wares  
Threading the city to and fro,  
Through lanes and noisy thoroughfares,  
Methought that thus the Fates still go  
Selling the old same stuffs of life,—  
Like a young wench and an old wife.

## Associations

My soul by thoughts like these is stirred,  
 That heeds not Nature's law :—  
 This shard-borne beetle Shakspeare heard,  
 This sad moon Sidney saw,

This daisy's guileless upturned glance  
 Moved Froissart once to song,  
 As on some palfrey gay, aprance,  
 He rode in plumèd throng,

This lizard's course along the wall,  
 On Dante's downcast eyes,  
 Flashed like the sudden zigzag fall  
 Of lightning from the skies,

These acres of far-foaming spray  
 Of the wave-tufted sea  
 Like fields seemed, where they toss the hay,  
 To Homer, as to me.

This fair world because it was theirs,  
 —Although as fair before—  
 For me another beauty wears  
 Than at the first it wore.

*ἔπεα πτερόεντα*

WHEN on the fallow, or the green,—  
 Far inland from the foaming shore,  
 One day the white sea-birds are seen,  
 Men say the sea is in uproar;

And so, like white birds of the beach  
 Mingling with the land's dusky birds,  
 When with the words of wonted speech  
 Mix poesy's impassioned words,

It is because the soul's distraught  
 With seething storm, for only then  
 The tameless strains of song untaught  
 Take refuge in the tongues of men.



## Love's Alchemy

As shining April to October seems,  
Such, Sweet, thou seemst to me,  
And if of thee I might have any dreams,  
So I should dream of thee :—

Nor would I any more thy young fresh years,  
Nor any fewer mine,—  
To me so precious is this cup of tears,—  
Of nectar, not of brine !

## Autumn Beauty

'Tis with her beauty as an Autumn day  
That watery sunbeams with vague splendour gild,  
When from some rose, late-bloomed on the rose-spray,  
A most soul-ravishing sweetness is distilled;

When all the land lies like Elysium,  
Lapped in a dream,—daylong with dew bepearled;  
But in a night the first mad frost may come  
And make to-morrow winter of the world!

L

## To Blanche

**BOTH** are to me thy body's taper dear,  
And dear the wasteful flame of thy wild soul,  
That at the other's cost burns up so clear,—  
For its transcendent half consumes the whole:

The taper's self is dear to me indeed,  
And dear the shining flame with which 'tis lit,  
Alas, that one should on the other feed,  
And that its shining so consumeth it!

## At Keats' Grave

AND yet we cannot dream of thee and death,  
Who to the heart of Nature wast so near,  
That every common thing to thee was dear  
And sacred,—every wild flower's look, and breath,

And bird's sweet note, and sound of the vast sea:—  
O say not "writ in water" was thy fame,  
Among the ever living is thy name,  
Keats! and we cannot dream of death and thee!

## At Fontainebleau

I WATCHED, along the lake, how passed  
A troop of glittering cavalry;—  
And, in the water, how went by  
The pale reflections that they cast:

Like them, I said, booted and spurred,  
And bright-armed,—pat and palpable,  
Men's lives pass by, and pass withal  
Like painted shadows vague and blurred.

## Mad Song

I AM myself, Proserpina,  
 For whom the waking world grows green,  
 And to black Hades who have been,—  
 Bound to the dark, and to the day ;

And I have ate, to my soul's bane,  
 The fruit that's bitterer than death,—  
 That's sweet, the lying fable saith,  
 And I must eat of it again ;

Though loathing, I must eat of it,—  
 That is not luscious in the mouth,  
 But maketh dry as summer's drouth,  
 And to the throat is dust and grit :

And he who of its taste will try  
 Will know it harsh as heart's remorse,  
 And it will make his spirit hoarse.  
 Proserpina, myself am I,—

Who else to be I cannot tell,  
 Who make the world to bloom and bud,  
 Who in my veins have the spring's blood,  
 And half the year go down to Hell.

## To November

COME, O November, with thy dank, moist breath,  
Scented with mouldering death !—  
Be every blade, of the rain-soaked grass, bowed,—  
No blue rent break the cloud !  
But let not the wood-pigeon from the gloom  
Call, nor the violet bloom !

Come, O November, with thy passionless calm !—  
Reach me thy hand's cold palm !—  
Together let us walk through life's waste field,  
That nothing more must yield ;—  
But ah ! let not Love's low veiled voice be heard,—  
That might not be endured !

## Bitter-sweet

SOMETIMES for me decreed, meseems,  
 That I in life no love should find,—  
 Except to dream of in my dreams,  
 And muse of in my mournful mind,—  
 But that my songs of love, thereby,  
 Might learn some strange sweet quality :

As they in damp vaults had to sit  
 Who worked old Alençon's rare lace,—  
 Because that so they gave to it  
 Its delicate celled-seaweed grace,  
 While others, homely stuffs that spun,  
 Beside their doors sat, in the sun.



## Art's Frost

**FREEZE**, balmy raindrops, as ye fall  
 From the mellow cloud !  
 And crystal snowflakes, wind round all  
 A cold white shroud !—

Hush the green world of whispering leaves,  
 And piping bird,  
 Till, if at all her wild heart heaves,  
 'Twill not be heard !—

Breathe, poesy, thy pure chill breath  
 On love's hot tears ;  
 Turn them to dateless gems for death  
 That long endures ;—

For that sweet pain that made them start,  
 And that fond fever,  
 Only a fair cold thing of art  
 Must be for ever !

## Hit

THAT bird that, wounded to the quick,  
     Falls not, but flies a space unheeding,—  
 As though to death she were not sick,  
     Nor felt the fatal hurt fresh-bleeding,  
 I do not ask why so she does,  
 My heart too well the reason knows :

For when with the envenomed shaft  
     'Twas pierced, of pitiless disaster,  
 Those viewless pinions, life that waft,  
     Flagged not, but beat awhile the faster,—  
 Like that poor bird's that forward flies,  
 And on a sudden drops and dies.

M

## Solace Refuted

THOUGH none I've ever moved to love,  
 I laugh to think that, when I'm dead,  
 Belike to envy I shall move  
 Some lover who my verse has read;—

Who, fevered by its amorous lines,  
 May feel an epicure's regret  
 For some rare pleasure he divines  
 I took of, he's not tasted yet:

Yet this poor solace should I have,  
 As oil poured in my senseless bones,  
 Fortune would grudge it in the grave,  
 Who in my life all part disowns,—

For, after meditation, he  
 Would reason soon, with riper wit,  
 That love so dear could never be  
 To any who was dear to it!

## Song a Disease

THE ripe oak-apple, in its crimson globe,  
 A secret worm conceals,  
 And through the clear complexion, if one probe,  
 The rank cause it reveals:—

Pearls that are chosen to suit Beauty's self,  
 Before each precious stone,  
 Are not the work of magic or sea-elf,  
 But of the oyster's moan:—

And poesy, so prized of mortal kind,  
 Is but the fruit of pain—  
 A fierce disease of the too feeling mind  
 That feeds on heart and brain.

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